

REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for the careful examination of the application, and for the suggestions for amending the application. However, in view of the foregoing amendments and the remarks that follow, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the outstanding rejections.

Specification:

In response to the objections raised by the Examiner, the specification has been amended to indicate that the application claims the benefit of the provisional application. In addition, the abstract has been revised.

Drawings:

On March 28, 2002, formal drawings were filed with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. It is not clear if the Examiner received a copy of the formal drawings. However, it appears that there were some differences between the formal drawings and the informal drawings filed with the application. Accordingly, a set of the original informal drawings filed with the application are submitted herewith and are marked up in red to show the changes incorporated in the formal drawings.

In addition, a marked up set of the formal drawings filed on March 28, 2002 is also submitted herewith to show proposed changes to overcome the objections that the Examiner has raised with regard to the drawings. The changes made to the drawings render moot the objections raised by the Examiner, with the exception that it does not

appear that the line from 17 should be dashed in Figure 3a. The line from reference numeral 17 shows the edge of the leakage barrier. Accordingly, that line has not been shown in dashed form.

Furthermore, the binder 50 has been illustrated in schematic form in Figure 1.

Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the objections to the drawings.

Disclosure Objections:

The specification has been amended as suggested by the Examiner. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the objection to the disclosure.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112:

In response to the prior art rejections, as well as the claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 2. In addition, the combined claim has been amended to clarify the issues raised by the Examiner. For example, the term "its" is no longer used. In addition, it is clear that there is only one fastening.

With regard to the dependent claims 3-8, 10-12, and 14-16, proper antecedent basis for "the binder" is now found in claim 1.

All other issues raised under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, should be addressed by the foregoing amendments.

In the event that the Examiner is of the opinion that additional issues exist with regard to 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned attorney so that such issues may be promptly resolved.

Art Rejections:

Claims 1, 4, 6, 9, and 13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,904,251, hereinafter Igaue. However, the subject matter of claim 2 has been incorporated into claim 1, thus rendering this rejection moot.

Claims 1, 3-7, 9, and 11-16 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,120,488. However, this rejection has also been rendered moot by the incorporation of the subject matter of claim 2 into claim 1.

Claims 1 and 2 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,454,803, hereinafter Sageser. In particular, the Examiner appears to be relying upon the Figure 7 embodiment, wherein a center portion of the side panel 62 is secured to the crotch region 26 by an attachment means 100. See Figure 7 and column 10, lines 62-65. The specification further states that the bond provided by the attachment means 100 may be breakable such that the user may release all or a portion of the distal edge 66 in the crotch region 26 to obtain a desired fit. The specification implies that the user will manually break the bonds of the attachment means 100 prior to putting on the diaper. Furthermore, it does not appear that the barriers in the Figure 7 embodiment include an elasticized edge.

In response to the rejection based on Sageser, claim 1, which has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 2, has been further amended to indicate that the second edge of each of the leakage barriers contains elastic so as to gather the second edge at least in the central portion thereof. As set forth above, Sageser does not specifically disclose that the leakage barriers have an elasticized edge.

In addition, amended claim 1 indicates that the leakage barrier is fastened in a temporary manner by a binder which loses the adhesive or cohesive capacity of the binder during use of the absorbent product. However, in Sageser, there is no indication that the attachment means 100 loses its adhesive or cohesive capacity during use. Instead, the bond of the attachment means 100 is manually broken prior to putting on the diaper. Accordingly, Sageser does not teach or suggest the combination of claim 1, wherein the leakage barrier is fastened in a temporary manner by a binder which loses the adhesive or cohesive capacity during use of the absorbent.

Accordingly, claim 1 is clearly patentable over Sageser.

Claim 2 has been canceled to avoid duplication with amended claim 1.

Claim 10 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Igaue in view of Ujimoto '489. However, this rejection should be rendered moot by the incorporation of the subject matter of claim 2 into claim 1, from which claim 10 depends.

The Examiner has indicated that claim 8 patentably distinguishes over the art. Accordingly, claim 8 has been rewritten in independent form.

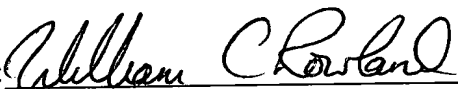
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the outstanding rejections.

In the event that there are any questions concerning this amendment, or the application in general, the Examiner is respectfully urged to telephone the undersigned attorney so that prosecution of the application may be expedited.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: September 24, 2003

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Abstract of the Disclosure

An absorbent product has an absorption body with a generally oblong shape with two longitudinal sides, two transverse sides, a longitudinal center line, and also includes a first, liquid-permeable surface layer and a second, essentially liquid-impermeable surface layer, an essentially liquid-impermeable backing layer, an absorption body positioned between the liquid-permeable surface layer and the backing layer, two leakage barriers made of flexible material in the longitudinal direction on each side of the longitudinal center line. Each leakage barrier has a first edge permanently fastened along the first, liquid-permeable surface layer and a second edge which extends in the direction of the longitudinal center line of the absorbent product. The first surface and/or the second surface of each leakage barrier is fastened to or near to the first, liquid-permeable surface layer and/or the second, liquid-impermeable surface layer.